

Arkansas Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Initiative

COMBINED MEETING: FAMILY SUPPORT AND PARENT EDUCATION WORK GROUPS

October 24, 2005 1 p.m. to 2 p.m.
Members Present: ,Sherrill Archer, Megan Coyle, Elaine Davis, Deborah Gangluff, Martha Hiett, Nick Long, Sherri Jo McLemore, Kenneth W. Meyers, Gwen Paul, Martha Reeder, Kathy Robinson, and Paula C. Watson.
Regrets were received from: Nancy Yarbrough.
The meeting was called to order by Martha Reeder. The group made self-introductions.
Agenda Item #1: QRS Update and Draft Recommendations
<p>Discussion: Martha Reeder discussed the draft QRS recommendations prepared by the small groups at the last meeting. The six recommendations from the small groups were included in the handouts</p> <p>Martha shared information related to QRS performance measures from other states. The group that is writing the plan is reviewing the basic structure from six states that are similar to Arkansas. All the states have four or five tiers. The way in which the Arkansas QRS has identified Family/Partner/Community Collaboration and Support for Medical Home as a separate performance measure is a unique piece in the Arkansas QRS plan.</p> <p>The QRS sub-group has decided the first tier: Each program must have a regular license to enter into the program. Probationary licenses are not acceptable. To receive a regular license, a center must be in operation at least one year. There cannot be any non-compliance issues attached to it. Also, if a center has a regular license, to enter into the QRS program, a "letter of intent" must be submitted. A self study packet will then be sent to the center. Some things can be included in the self study—it may have to be written or suggested resources can be named.</p> <p>Level two under program evaluation requires that every program undergo an environmental rating scale appropriate for the age population served. There are three steps to the second level:</p> <div><div>?</div>Onsite Program Review by outside evaluator.</div> <div><div>?</div>ERS Training for Administrator</div> <div><div>?</div>Written Program Improvement Plan</div> <p>The combined work groups can decide what steps they need to take to have a more effective relationship with parents.</p>

Agenda Item #1, Continued: QRS Update and Draft Recommendations

**Discussion:** The third level is where the big indicators start to kick in. For instance, on level two a baseline ERS is needed. On level three a score is needed, and on level four the score will increase. Levels four and five are more intense versions of level three. In one state, there was a menu of specific parent activities. On the third level, three items were required, level four required four items, and level five required five items.

All stakeholders were encouraged to keep the following in mind as recommendations for the QRS are considered:

1. For parents/consumers: The system should be **simple** (clear, understandable, easy to use).
2. For child care programs: The system should be **valid** (fair, objective and accurate, reflecting actual quality of different programs) *and* **realistic** (structured so a wide range of programs could realistically progress to higher tiers).
- . For government: The system should be **efficient** (low cost, easy to administer).

This group needs to make some final decisions on the parent measurers. The group was reminded that, level one is the self-study.

**VOLUNTEERING.** Some of the comments/questions related to this measure and previous work include:

- ? You may want to consolidate some of the ideas and make them show up as one of the things on the actual scale.
- ? Begin a leadership program on level three.
- ? The present sheet is too complex—we may want to set a certain level of required activity.
- ? One of the problems is that it is vague enough for centers to get around it. To try to measure, it will be difficult.
- ? Specific things are part of the tool kit—example: ways to work with volunteers. It could be part of what is supplied to the programs.
- ? Do we want to recommend volunteer hours per child or go with a percentage
- ? Is there a way to include for things not necessarily on the center campus
- ? There should be opportunities for parents when they are not working—example: taking linens home on the week end for washing.
- ? Maybe it is easier to track parents than track percentages of parent volunteers times number of hours work. It is easier to keep track.
- ? Most of the A C programs are developing a volunteer form. They may have a sign-in roster related to the classroom. A C programs use quarterly reports. There is a need to get the percentage and some kind of system for reporting.
- ? The percentage should not be over 2 percent.
- ? Ask each parent to volunteer one hour a month.
- ? Do not submit any standards until level three.
- ? Level two could just be the suggestion box.
- ? Percentages need to be kept low.

<b>Agenda Item #1, Continued: QRS Update and Draft Recommendations</b>
<b>Discussion: Volunteering.</b> Comments/questions continued: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>? There must be concrete ways to show that programs are taking an active approach to involving parents. Ask programs to give percentages with number of hours for volunteers and the exact method of tracking.</li><li>? A simple form should be developed that can be downloaded from the web.</li><li>? Keeping track of hours might be something that programs may or may not have thought about in the past, giving it a dollar value.</li><li>? Showing parents what they have done for the program dollar wise is important.</li><li>? Need to survey parents of their interest in available volunteer opportunities.</li><li>? A log book needs to be established.</li><li>? Contact information related to the community should be available.</li><li>? A parent advisory board should be part of the decision-making process at the program.</li><li>? How do you measure that parents are part of the decision-making process</li><li>? There will probably be a separate scale for centers and family day-care homes. We should develop for center based and then step back from that.</li><li>? When the original parent survey to the program staff was administered, there was not a lot of involvement through the Parent Involvement boards.</li><li>? The Parent Involvement board should be at level four or five.</li><li>? A survey is needed every year for parents—this would encourage them to provide input on how programs should be defined. We could recommend a particular survey.</li><li>? There are some good models for advocacy training. Who is going to do that and how is the day care to find the funds to pay for it Who in the state is going to require it You cannot require people to do something that does not exist.</li><li>? Put "collaboration agreement" at level five. (This is where everyone in the community comes together to look at what can be done to help each other to make sure children don't fall through the cracks. Everyone identifies what they can bring to the "pot" and everyone signs off on it. They are not fighting over the children and utilizing all resources. There can be an agreement with the health community, fire, police, community colleges, businesses, etc.)</li><li>? What about looking at resources regarding translators—it could be added to the resource sheet.</li></ul>

<b>Agenda Item #2: Wrap up and Next Steps</b>
<b>Discussion:</b> Because of the time limitations, the group decided that the other measures would be worked on by one or two people and forwarded to Martha Reeder and Paula C. Watson by Thursday, November 1 . The individual assignments are indicated in the Task box.  <b>Next Meeting Date:</b> November 22, 2005, 9-11 a.m.. at the Cox Creative Center in Little Rock.  There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

RESULTING TASKS AND ASSIGNMENTS:

- ? COMMUNICATIONS - Elaine Davis and Kenneth Myers
- ? PARENTING SKILLS - Sherri Jo McLemore and Megan Coyle
- ? STUDENT LEARNING - Martha Hiatt and Sherrill Archer